GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1172
ANSWERED ON:09.02.2017
Illegal Mining of Gypsum
Patole Shri Nanabhau Falgunrao

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether illegal mining of gypsum reserves is taking place in Bikaner region of Rajasthan near Pakistan border, if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government to check the same;

(b) whether more than 10 km. long mines have been allotted to the mining mafia ignoring the security concerns of B.S.F., if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government proposes to take immediate measures in view of the country''s security concerns, if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government proposes to introduce verification provision for all miners working in gypsum mines, if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether the Government has taken any concrete measures to pre-empt the infiltration by Pakistani terrorists by digging tunnels through gypsum mines, if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR POWER, COAL, NEW & RENEWABLE ENERGY AND MINES (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL)

(a), (b) & (d): Gypsum is a minor mineral. As per section 15 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 state governments are empowered to frame rules for regulating grant of mineral concessions in respect of minor minerals and for purposes connected therewith. Further as per section 23C of the said Act, state governments are empowered to frame rules for preventing illegal mining, transportation and storage of minerals. As such, regulation of grant of mineral concessions in respect of minor minerals, and prevention and control of illegal mining are matters which lie within the legislative and administrative jurisdiction of state governments. Details of illegal mining and details of mining leases granted for minor minerals are not maintained centrally.
Based on the information collected from the State Government of Rajasthan, it is submitted that there is no mining lease sanctioned along the border for mineral gypsum in Jaisalmer and Sriganganagar. However, for mineral gypsum five mining leases of area less than 5 hectares have been sanctioned in District Bikaner along the border in 5 km. area and one mining lease has been sanctioned to M/s Rajasthan State Mines and Minerals Limited (state PSU) over an area of 280.50 hectares.
It has been also reported that there are occurrences of both surface and sub-surface gypsum deposits along the border, which occur at a distance of about 125-150 km. due North-North West of Bikaner headquarters.
It is further reported that in the bordering tehsils of Bikaner like Bajju, Pugal, Khajuwala & Dantor, 40 vehicles were seized in the year 2015-16 and 57 vehicles were seized in the year 2016-17 for illegal transportation of mineral gypsum, and FIRs in this regard have also been registered in Police Stations; and that the district administration is keeping a watch on illegal mining with the help of Police and Mines Department, as a result of which several illegal mining activities have stopped.
It has also been reported that the District Collector of Bikaner vide letter dated 22.04.2016 has issued directions that all miners working in the gypsum mines should submit their ID proof to the concerned Police Stations; and that the miners have reported compliance in this regard.
(c) & (e): Union Ministry of Home Affairs has informed that as per available information, these mines are located about 3-15 kms away from the International Border. So, there is very little chance of these being used as a tunnel for infiltration. However, security forces, in general, take appropriate precautions to check illegal infiltration through any route/means.

****